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THE SONGSTER'S BANE.

EVER since the days of Polyhymnia and Bacchus, who were both children of that jovial old Mormon, Jupiter, singing and strong liquor have been pleasantly associated in poetry and practice alike. Song, in days so little remote from the present time as to be comfortably within the memory of middle-aged men, was almost as intrinsic an element of social conviviality as wine itself. Lyrics abounded in which the delights and advantages of "potations pottle-deep" were set forth with great force and vivacity; *prime-donne* of world-wide renown earned nightly and rapturous encores by their spirited renderings of *brindisi*; leading concert-room singers melodiously insisted upon the excellences of fermented grape-juice, imbibed with frequency *pro re nata*. Even the humbler liquor, beer, was not forlorn of tuneful advocacy. In the course of a deservedly popular opera it was favourably mentioned as a beverage endowed with the faculty of imparting haughtiness to the British character; its praises were celebrated in meritorious Burschen-Lieder by the dozen; a popular English bard had invoked the direst maledictions upon the heads of those ill-advised persons who, themselves indifferent to the charms of a judicious infusion of malt and hops, were malignantly bent upon depriving the impoverished Anglo-Saxon of his favourite potable. In a glee of some celebrity it was put forward as a praiseworthy action on the part of one, Willie—family name not on record—that he personally brewed a peck of malt; and the vocalists who were wont to call public attention harmoniously to this particular feat never failed to mention, with impressive insistence, their settled resolve to partake of Willie's preparation, even though they should have to sit up for that purpose until the herald of dawn should feel called upon, in the exercise of his professional functions, to announce the approach of day. Lays of a Bacchanalian character are gone out of fashion nowadays; it is but seldom that the fair *soprani* of society, when solicited to sing at musical parties, break out into the enlivening strains of "Let us drink from joyous chalices," or that a beauteous contralto volunteers a statement, in the manner of Maffeo Orsini, that she "drinks and derides the madmen who think about the future." Even the baritone of the suburban concert-room has discontinued the vocal reference to the "Vintage of Champagne" of which he was formerly prodigal; and the *basso-profondo*, to whom a Bacchanalian propaganda used to come as naturally, in the musical way, as Cupidinous plead-

ings to the *primo tenore*, no longer discourages temperance by sonorous allusions, *coram populo*, to

"Glorious wine, wine, wine!

Liquor divine, di—vine!"

as of yore, when conviviality was a salient characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race. Even at bachelor parties and other exclusively male gatherings of a free and easy character, one never hears any songster of the day troll out Morris's facetious verses in praise of "The Bottle"; nor is the least attempt made, more or less tunefully, to propound "a reason fair to drink and fill again," the burthen of a cheerful post-prandial ditty that was in high favour not more than five-and-thirty years ago. And so wider, as the Germans say. Nobody glorifies wine or beer in joyous numbers any more. Brandy is forlorn of a bard; and even whiskey, though tolerably popular throughout the United Kingdom, remains unsung. Rum and gin are ignored by the poets of these degenerate days; and it may be doubted that any one of our fashionable composers would condescend to set a lyric treating of the intrinsic merits of "Best Jamaica" or "Old Tom" even if its verses had sprung from the inspired brain of Algernon Swinburne or of Alfred Austin.

As a matter of fact, the time has been out of joint for some years past, as far as the traditional intimacy between music and alcohol is concerned. A society that is infatuated with School Boards and tolerant of Blue Ribbon Armies and other cognate specialistic hosts can hardly be expected to listen with patience—far less with pleasurable sympathy—to songs in which the consumption of intoxicating liquors is enthusiastically recommended to the general public. We do not find members of the "Peace at any price" party expatiating on the admirable qualities of a new torpedo or an improved machine-gun; nor is it usual for vegetarians to manifest a devouring interest in the exhibits of a Cattle Show. Total abstainers and aggressively temperate persons, who exercise great power in our commonwealth just now, discourage—when they do not actually denounce—everything convivial, and doubtless believe that they are fulfilling a sacred duty to their less intelligent fellow-men by so doing. Were they not, as a rule, much too conceited to welcome encouragement in or appreciate confirmation of their views, even when emanating from authoritative sources, they would hasten to acknowledge their obligations to Mr. Lennox Browne, the most learned and skilful throat-doctor of the day, who has come forward, armed to the teeth with all the weapons of an unrivalled professional experience in maladies of the



vocal organs, to prove that Alcohol is the Songster's Bane. His instructive work, recently published under the title of "Voice Use and Stimulants," has already been noticed at some length, and with the respectful consideration it so amply merits, in the columns of THE LUTE. But, on perusing it carefully, I find it so full of matter fraught with lively interest to the musical profession (more particularly, of course, to vocalists), that I feel justified in outlining a few of its more salient features to those amongst the readers of this periodical who may not have read Mr. Browne's valuable little book.

The author unhesitatingly ascribes habitual intemperance to the public singers of times past, as a class, and points out that their alcoholic excesses have suggested many proverbs and dramatic types reflecting discredit upon the professional vocalist. "The result," he further observes, "of the general practice of singers in respect to drinking, until quite recent times, has been that probably no vocal student—or, indeed, very few accomplished singers—when consulting a doctor as to his voice, fails to ask the question, 'What am I to sing on?' that is, 'What alcoholic stimulant do you advise me to take, to aid me in the functional expression of my art?'" Mr. Browne's answer to this question would be, "None at all;" for he not only holds that the lives of many professional singers are cut short prematurely by indulgence in spirituous liquors, but that the use of these latter, in an overwhelming majority of cases, inflicts positive injury upon the vocal organs, and as a necessary consequence, impairs the force, quality and durability of the voice itself. He states that, within his own professional cognizance, four Italian operatic singers of conspicuous eminence have been killed by alcohol, and that many others of less renown but considerable ability owe their ruin to the same cause. It is his conviction that the narrow path of total abstinence offers no hindrance to the vocalist, but that the broader and more agreeable one of temperance must be confined to strict limits, if functional health is to be maintained; and that transgression of those bounds of moderation will lead as certainly to deterioration of quality in the voice, and to abridgment of the duration of productive faculty as it does to the abbreviation of life itself. This view of the contingencies of a moderate consumption of stimulants, such as nine medical men out of every ten rather encourage than prohibit in their average patients, is somewhat startling, and can hardly fail, I should fancy, to cause serious anxiety to a large number of vocalists—more especially to those who earn their living by singing in connection with the lyric drama. For artists belonging to this particular category are necessarily thrown into the society of actors, the most genially convivial of human beings; and in such cheery company the observance of total abstinence is inevitably attended with countless inconveniences and annoyances. Temperance, Mr. Browne infers, shall avail the singer nothing, or so little as to be hardly worth mentioning. Safety is only to be found in teetotalism; that is, safety to the

voice, the bread-earner. In support of this postulate, Mr. Browne has been at great pains to elicit the opinions of professional British vocalists as to their experience and practice with relation to the use of stimulants, and has succeeded in obtaining nearly four hundred categorical answers to the series of pertinent questions put by him to his correspondents, as follows: 1. Are you in the habit of taking alcoholic stimulants? 2. If so, in what form? 3. What is your general habit in this respect; e.g., is the stimulant taken at meals, between meals, at the end of the day, or at pleasure and opportunity? 4. Do you take any stimulant immediately before or during the use of the voice, as an aid to its exercise?

To these pregnant and exhaustive queries Mr. Browne received three hundred and eighty answers from male vocalists of sufficient note to have obtained public record of their names and addresses in Reeves's Musical Directory. More than one third of these singers occupy positions in connection with the Established Church as lay vicars and clerks, conductors or members of Cathedral choirs, and "gentlemen of the chapels royal." On the whole, the avowed habits, as far as the consumption of alcohol is concerned, of these songsters, contrast favourably with those of church-singers as described two centuries and a-half ago by Bishop Erle in his "Micro-Cosmographie." *Inter alia*, the worthy prelate wrote as follows:—"The common singing-men in Cathedrall Churches are a bad Societie, and yet a Companie of good Fellowes, that roare deepe in the Quire, deeper in the Tauerne. . . . Theyre Pastyme or Recreation is Prayers, theyre Exercise drinking, yet herein so religiously addycted that they serue God oftest when they are drunke. . . . Upon Worky-Dayes they behauie themselves at prayers as at their Pots, for they swallowe them downe in an Instant. Theyre Gownes are lac'd commonlie with streamings of Ale, the superfluities of Cuppes or Throat aboue measure. Theyre skylle in Melodie makes them the better Companions abroade; and their Anthemes abler to sing Catches. Long-liv'd for the moste parte they are not, especially the Base, they ouer flowe theyre Banke so oft to drowne the Organs. Brieflie, if they escape arresting, they dye constantlie in God's seruice; and to eake theyre Death with more Patience, they haue Wyne and Cakes at theyre Funerall." The humorous tone of the learned Bishop of Salisbury's remarks upon the manners and customs of the cathedral-choristers of his day seems to indicate that their inveterate bibulousness was regarded by ecclesiastical dignitaries in the year of Grace 1628 as a venial offence; but it is obvious from the passages above quoted that intemperance was at that time the rule rather than the exception amongst professional singers, whose services were well-nigh monopolised by the Church. It is far otherwise with vocalists of this particular class at the present time, if we may assume that Mr. Browne's choir correspondents are fair average types of their order. A good many of them—organists, choir-masters, and conductors of Associa-

tions for the Promotion of Harmony—are total abstainers, and very consistently—as they never partake of them—denounce stimulants as "harmful," "injurious," "useless," and "prejudicial." I quote at random from these gentlemen's letters. Mr. Frank Edmonds, after pointing out that alcoholic drinks hurt the voice, and that "as time goes on the amount of stimulant has to be increased to produce the same result as at first,"—a statement which infers that in order to keep up the damage inflicted upon your vocal organs by moderate potations you must gradually increase the quantity of these latter until you positively wallow in strong liquor—goes on to express his apprehensions that the "general body" of the profession is certainly inclined to the use of stimulants and also tobacco, "probably because they like them, not necessarily because of their utility." And not a bad reason either, when one comes to think of it, for indulging in a modest quencher and a mild Cabaña! Besides, we have Falstaff's authority that "hollaing of anthems" is thirsty and fatiguing work. Mr. Edmonds is quite right in believing that his colleagues wet their whistles because they like to take a drink when they feel that they want it; but what does he mean, I wonder, by a "general body?" It is surely the privilege of a body to be particular rather than general; also to be singular, not plural, in number. A "general body" that drinks spirits because "they" like "them" is, to say the least of it, a grammatical monstrosity.

Mr. Thomas Filmer, comprehensively described as an "organist, vocalist and teacher of many musical instruments," is of opinion (being himself a teetotaller) that "men that drink," as he somewhat loosely puts it, "are unfit to teach or perform well on any instrument." This is, indeed, a sweeping allegation; moreover, it is so untrue as to be a very curiosity of incorrectness. Amongst the best teachers and instrumentalists of present and past days not one in twenty is or has been a total abstainer from stimulants. I have lived among musicians for the last forty years, and have been honoured with the personal acquaintance of nearly all the leading composers and executants in England, Germany and Italy since the end of the Crimean War. To the best of my remembrance, not one of these gifted men was or is a teetotaller; on the contrary, the greatest musicians of my time have been, with hardly an exception of conspicuous mark, addicted to kindly and moderate conviviality. Such testimony as that of Mr. Filmer weakens rather than strengthens the cause on behalf of which it is advanced. What opinion can the readers of "Voice Use and Stimulants" entertain of a provincial organist who stigmatises all the chief composers, teachers and soloists alive with incapacity, on the ground that they do not share his personal views with respect to the effects of alcohol upon musicians? As far as intolerance and ignorant generalisation are concerned, however, Mr. Filmer is isolated amongst Mr. Browne's abstinent correspondents, who, with that exception, confine

themselves to recording their own experiences of the advantages they have derived, as singers, from foregoing spirituous liquors. Mr. Arthur Tuer, for instance, used to drink champagne, to the detriment, as he believes, of his voice. He has given up sparkling wines, and sensibly remarks: "I believe a bad throat proceeds, nine cases out of ten, from the stomach being out of order; and in my case I feel sure stimulants caused that." Mr. Theodore Barth, again, thinks that beer-drinking and smoking in moderation will not permanently injure any voice; and Mr. C. W. Kelly, who sings at both the Dublin Cathedrals, observes: "I can safely say that taking a bottle of stout at dinner does not impair the vocal organs, but gives strength to the whole system." It is Mr. G. R. Renwick's conviction, oddly enough, that neither alcohol in any form, nor tobacco has any influence upon the voice. Mr. D. S. Shepley, a member of St. George's Choir at Windsor, has lately taken to stimulants, finding that he needed something to invigorate him after excessive work. A member of the choir at Lincoln Cathedral, Mr. G. T. Helmsley, replying to Mr. Browne's fourth question, writes: "From personal observation during a life passed among cathedral lay clerks, my own impression is that a great many men in our position take stimulants before singing *because it is the custom*. We are all the slaves of habit, and lay clerks are not always free men in this matter. But I have found, when out with singing parties, that should the stimulant not be forthcoming even the most slavish supporters of the custom have been able to sing just as well without as with it." Mr. Walter Barnett invariably imbibes a stimulant before singing, either a glass of stout or one of port. Sherry "parches" him, and produces the same effect upon Mr. Surman, a Christ Church chorist, who finds a glass of port beneficial before singing in public. Mr. Seymour Kelly, lay vicar choral of Chichester Cathedral, states that a glass of champagne taken before singing, and another swallowed during the interval in the performance, gives tone to and braces up the voice. Another public singer, whose name the author withholds, says that he takes a glass or two of stout, champagne, port, or claret immediately before singing, and six or eight glasses of porter, or occasionally spirits, between his various meals; whilst an eminent *basso* informs Mr. Browne that he (the *basso*) consumes alcoholic stimulants "always, of all kinds and at all hours; invariably at meals, and between them whenever he gets the chance; further, divers and sundry 'night-caps' at the end of the day." This gentleman by his own confession, takes his liquor whenever the opportunity for so doing occurs, or, as he frankly puts it, "whenever he can get it, which is not always the case." Mr. Browne drily says of him: "No better example could be cited of the influence of alcoholic indulgence as a pre-disponent to laryngitis."

Balancing one class of the evidence adduced from the above sources against the other I am led to conclude that moderation is the golden rule with regard to drinking, as it is to every other human

habit and pleasure. Singers who steep themselves in alcohol ruin their digestions; consequently their health suffers and all their physical powers are impaired, including the vocal organs. That these latter are damaged by temperate indulgence in the liquids which "gladden the heart of man" does not appear to me to be conclusively proved by any facts or arguments contained in "Voice Use and Stimulants." Mr. Lennox Browne graphically describes the havoc wrought in the singer's throat by confirmed intemperance; but the physical penalties inflicted on the habitual drunkard by his darling vice have no terrors for the moderate drinker, to whom they do not apply. Somewhat alarming, perhaps, is the following passage, "I have often observed, in addition to recurrent hoarseness, a general uncertainty of intonation (the tendency being generally to sing flat) a gradual loss of high notes, diminished resonance, and a want of precision in both verbal and vocal utterance, in singers who could not be accused of alcoholic indulgence to the extent of anything like intoxication, but who have certainly drunk to excess in relation to their work, and unwisely in relation to the period of indulgence. In most of these subjects chronic dryness of the throat is complained of—which, although the result of a bad habit, is often made the excuse for its continuance." Singers who indulge in casual "pegs" of sherry, miscellaneous glasses of beer, and indiscriminate brandies and soda between meals or at other odd times will do well, in the public interest as well as their own, to forego these potations, if the result of partaking of them is to flatten tone-production. Perhaps, after all, beer may not only be the source of superciliousness in Britons, as the librettist of *Marietta* would have us believe, but of the painfully flat singing that is so prevalent throughout Germany. But a beaker of ale, or a glass or two of good wine, imbibed in conjunction with the consumption of food, cannot injure the most delicate and sensitive throat organs, for the simple reason that it does not affect the singer's general health in one way or another. Many valuable hints, in connection with the hygienes of the vocal apparatus, are contained in the latter portion of Mr. Lennox Browne's interesting little book, which also abounds in entertaining anecdotes relating to the idiosyncrasies of eminent singers; and I venture once more to recommend its perusal to every active member of the musical profession.

Wm. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

FAMOUS FIRST REPRESENTATIONS.

V.—MOZART'S "NOZZE DI FIGARO."

BEAUMARCHAIS's *Marriage of Figaro* was not nearly so well adapted for musical setting as his *Barber of Seville*, and it may be partly for this reason that while the latter has been made the basis of no fewer than seven different operas, the former has been treated in lyrical form only once. To be sure, the first composer so to treat it was Mozart, in whose steps it would have been risk indeed to follow.

One cannot but think of Beaumarchais's *Marriage of Figaro* as for the most part a political pamphlet in dramatic form. It was, as the first Napoleon put it, "*la révolution déjà en action*." Cut out the political allusions and the direct attacks on persons in power, and a very dull intrigue remains, enlivened only by the graceful utterances of the amorous Cherubino. The piece, however, had made a prodigious sensation in France; and it was being talked about all over Europe just as Mozart happened to be seeking a fit subject for a comic opera. At least one character, moreover, in Beaumarchais's comedy presented a distinct musical personality; and though, viewed after the event, the work seems to have been nothing less than a revolutionary call to arms, it must be remembered that no one at the time, with the single exception of the unhappy king—enlightened beforehand as to the fate that awaited him—perceived what it really portended. Otherwise, Mozart's choice of a subject would certainly not have been sanctioned by the Emperor. Joseph II. had clearly forbidden the representation of Beaumarchais's comedy at Vienna; but only on account (as Otto Jahn puts it) of its "freedom of tone." The comedy inspired him with no particular aversion, or he would not have allowed plot, character and title to be used in the version proposed by Da Ponte for Mozart. What, indeed, had been tolerated in France, the country actually threatened, might well be allowed to pass in Austria, especially when, as in Du Ponte's libretto, the offensive political matter had been all removed. As a matter of fact Da Ponte and Mozart set to work on their new opera in 1785, a year after the comedy on which it was founded had been produced at Paris; and if Da Ponte can be believed it was all finished in six weeks—as rapid a piece of improvisation, all things considered, as the composition of the *Barber of Seville* by Rossini in a fortnight. But we have authentic accounts from Rossini himself and from the singers who took part in the first representation as to the circumstances under which *Il Barbiere* was composed, and the time which the work of composition occupied; whereas in the case of *Le Nozze* we have no evidence but that of Da Ponte, as given in his memoirs—which does not entirely agree with the entries in Mozart's note-book. No one seems to have questioned Da Ponte on the subject; though this might have been easily done—at least through correspondence—by more than one biographer of Mozart. Da Ponte passed the last years of his life in America, where Mr. Gallenger met him in 1836 or 1837, a year or so before his death. But Mr. Gallenger seems to have had no conversation with him on the subject of Mozart. He was indeed under the strange impression (see his very interesting volumes of memoirs) that Da Ponte had furnished not Mozart but Rossini with libretti.

Otto Jahn's extracts from Mozart's note-book show that Mozart lingered for some time over his opera before going to work upon it in real earnest; also that when it was occupying much of his attention he still found time for producing a number of independent compositions.

When Mozart had made enough progress with *Le Nozze* to be able to give some idea of it as a whole, he informed the Emperor of the fact, and, summoned to the Court, played over some portions of it. Joseph II., though not previously a believer in Mozart's dramatic genius, was delighted with the work, and ordered that it should at once be put in rehearsal. This caused much vexation to Mozart's numerous enemies, including Count Rosenberg, the manager, "a sworn enemy," says Otto Jahn, quoting from a musical journal of the period, "to everything German."

Whether or not Mozart composed the greater part of the *Marriage of Figaro* in six weeks (and Da Ponte would have us believe that during that brief space of time he composed the whole of it), certain it is that he began it in November, 1785, six months before it was produced. "At last, after six weeks' silence," wrote his father to Marianne, the composer's sister, November 11, 1785, "I have received a letter from your brother, of November 2, containing quite twelve lines. His excuse for not writing is that he has been over head and ears at work on his opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro*. He has put off all his pupils to the afternoon, so that he may have his mornings free. I have no fear as to the music. But there will no doubt be much discussion and annoyance before he can get the libretto arranged to his wish; and having procrastinated and let the time slip after his usual fashion, he is obliged now to set to work in earnest, because Count Rosenberg insists upon it."

There were other difficulties to overcome before the work could be produced: difficulties more formidable by far than any connected with the libretto. Indeed, when once the Imperial sanction had been obtained, Mozart and Da Ponte seem to have agreed probably as to how, in a dramatic sense, the piece should be treated. "There were three operas," says Kelly, "now on the *tapis*; one by Righini (*Il Demogorgone*), another by Salieri (*La Grotta di Trofonio*), and one by Mozart, by special command of the Emperor. Mozart chose to have Beaumarchais's French comedy, *Le Mariage de Figaro*, made into an Italian opera, which was done with great ability by Da Ponte. These three pieces were nearly ready for representation at the same time; and each composer claimed the right of producing his opera first. The contest raised much discord and parties were formed. The characters of the three men were all very different. Mozart was as touchy as gunpowder and swore that he would put the score of his opera into the fire if it was not produced first. His claim was backed by a strong party. Righini, on the contrary, was working like a mole in the dark to get precedence. The third candidate was *Maestro di Capella* to the Court, a clever, shrewd man possessed of what Brun called 'crooked wisdom'; and his claims were backed by three of the principal performers, who formed a cabal not easily put down. Every one of the opera company took part in the contest. I alone was a stickler for Mozart, and naturally enough, for he had a claim on my warmest

wishes from my admiration of his powerful genius and the debt of gratitude I owed him for many personal favours. The mighty contest was put an end to by His Majesty issuing a mandate for Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro* to be instantly put into rehearsal."

But whether or not the Imperial mandate spoken of by Kelly was really issued, Salieri's opera, as a matter of fact, was first brought out. On the 18th of April, 1786, Mozart's father wrote to Marianne: "On the 28th, *Le Nozze di Figaro* is to be put on the stage for the first time. It will shame numbers if it succeeds, for I know that there has been a surprisingly strong cabal against it. Salieri and all his adherents will move heaven and earth against it. Dussek told me lately that my son met with such violent opposition because of his extraordinary talent."

According to Niemetschek, a Bohemian writer, who published the Reminiscences of Mozart soon after the great composer's death, the Italian singers did all they could to ruin the opera by intentional mistakes, so that they had to be sternly reminded of their duty by the Emperor, to whom Mozart is said to have appealed in despair at the end of the first act. This story seems, however, to rest on no better foundation than those so freely circulated soon after Mozart's death, of his having died through the effect of poison administered to him by the jealous Salieri. Niemetschek was from Prague, which at that time supported Germans against Italians, as now it supports Bohemians against Germans, and against all the world. Mozart, too, was an especial favourite at Prague, and in their enthusiasm for him the Bohemians may have been disposed to exaggerate the coldness and jealousy from which he had too often had to suffer at Vienna.

Kelly, who was not only present at the first performance, but in the characters of Basilio and of Don Curzio, and under the name of "Ochelly" took part in it, tells us, in direct opposition to Niemetschek, that the first representation was admirable, and that it was attended with the greatest possible success.

The following was the cast:—

| | | |
|-------------------|-----|------------------|
| Il Comte Almaviva | ... | Signor Mandini. |
| La Contessa | ... | Signora Laschi. |
| Susanna | ... | Signora Storace. |
| Figaro | ... | Signor Benucci. |
| Cherubino | ... | Signora Bussani. |
| Marcellina | ... | Signora Mandini. |
| Basilio | { | Signor Ochelly. |
| Don Curzio | { | Signor Ochelly. |
| Bartolo | { | Signor Bussani. |
| Antonio | ... | Signora Nanina |
| Barberina | ... | Gottlieb. |

"All the original performers," writes Kelly, "had the advantage of the composer's instruction, who transfused into their minds his inspired meaning. I shall never forget the little animated countenance when lighted up with the glowing rays of genius. It is impossible to describe it as it would be to paint

sunbeams. I remember that at the first rehearsal of the full band, Mozart was on the stage with his crimson pelisse and gold-band cocked hat, giving the time of the music to the orchestra. Figaro's song, 'Non piu andrai,' Benucci gave with the greatest animation and power of voice. I was standing close to Mozart, who, *sotto voce*, was repeating: 'Bravo, bravo, Benucci!' and when Benucci came to the fine passage, 'Cherubino alla vittoria, alla gloria militar,' which he gave out with stentorian lungs, the effect was electricity itself; for the whole of the performers on the stage, and those in the orchestra, as if actuated by one feeling of delight, vociferated, 'Bravo, bravo, Maestro! Viva, viva, grande Mozart!' Those in the orchestra, I thought, would never have ceased applauding by beating the bows of their violins against the music desks. The little man acknowledged by repeated obeisances his thanks for these distinguishing marks of enthusiastic applause bestowed upon him."

The piece being badly sung, as Niemetschek has so strangely set forth, the principal numbers in the opera were sung so effectively as to be in almost every case encored. So numerous, indeed, were the encores that the performance lasted nearly twice the time that had been calculated upon. The success, too, of the first night was maintained at subsequent representations. "At the second performance of your brother's opera," wrote Mozart's father to Marianne, "five pieces were encored, and on the third seven. One little duet [probably the melodious 'Sull'aria' for Susanne and the Countess] had to be sung three times."

So trying were the encores to some persons (among whom Mozart's rivals and their partisans were probably included), that after the first night the Emperor thought it desirable to forbid repetitions. Kelly, in his Memoirs, tells us how Joseph II., after issuing this order, spoke to Storace, Mandini and Benucci on the subject. "I dare say," he observed, "that you are well pleased at my having put a stop to encores. It must be fatiguing and distressing to you to repeat so many songs." Storace declared in reply, that it was indeed distressing; and the two other vocalists bowed, as if in support of their comrade's more than doubtful declaration. Kelly, however, who was present at the time, said boldly to the Emperor: "Do not believe them, Sire, they all like to be encored. At least I am sure I always do;" whereupon the Emperor laughed.

Kelly's remark was more or less true. Singers all like the compliment of an encore. But they do not all like the labour of singing a second time.

H. SUTHERLAND-EDWARDS.

THE facts as to Signor Piatti's carriage accident appear to be that he sustained a severe fracture of the right arm near the shoulder, and a deep cut on the forehead. Some time must elapse before the eminent artist can resume his duties. During the interval he will be sorely missed.

MDME. SAINTON-DOLBY.

WHEN turning over the leaves of an old letter-book the other day, I came upon an interesting souvenir of the late Mdme. Sainton-Dolby. In view of that eminent artist's retirement from public life fifteen years ago, and of the notice it would be my duty as a journalist to take of it, I begged Mdme. Sainton to give me a sketch of her career. She complied with her usual good nature, and the MS., lost sight of from that time till now, lies before me. The readers of THE LUTE will, I am sure, peruse a transcription of it with interest:—"Born in London, 1822. Was placed in R.A.M. in 1834. Was chosen to sing in semi-chorus at Antient Concerts, where I consider I gained more knowledge of the great masters, and experience in interpreting their works than I could have had in any other school, for, at that time, none but the greatest singers of the day were heard there—Malibran, Grisi, Caradori, Mario, Rubini, Braham, Tamburini, Lablache. It was considered a reward to sing in the semi-chorus, and it was one which at the time I appreciated, and since been thankful for. I now know how valuable those lessons were. I gained a King's Scholarship in 1837 or 1838, I forget which, and in 1840-1 made my first provincial tour under the management of Mr. Blagrove, the violinist, with Miss Bruce (now Mrs. Deacon) and Lindley, the violoncellist. In 1846 I was heard in Exeter Hall for the first time by Mendelssohn, who, after I had sung 'But the Lord is mindful,' asked Mr. Surman (then the conductor of the Sacred Harmonic Society) to introduce him. In the same year I was engaged for the Gewandhaus Concerts at Leipzig, under the joint conductorship of Mendelssohn and Gade; while there enjoying the friendship and visiting constantly in the family of Mendelssohn. An anecdote connected with the composition of *Elijah* (Mendelssohn was then writing that great work for the forthcoming Birmingham Festival) may not be out of place here. We were dining at Dr. Härtel's and were all at table, the guests including Dr. Schumann and Madame Schumann; but Mendelssohn was late. He arrived after the soup had been served. A vacant place was left for him by my side. He excused himself by saying he had been very busy with his oratorio, and turning to me said, 'I have sketched the bass part and now for the contralto.' 'Oh,' I exclaimed, 'do tell me what that will be like, because I am especially interested in that part.' 'Never fear,' he answered, 'it will suit you very well, for it is a true woman's part—half an angel and half a devil.' I did not know whether to take that as a compliment, but we had a good laugh over it. One of the proudest moments of my artist life was that when *Elijah* was performed for the first time in London. After I had sung 'O rest in the Lord,' Mendelssohn turned to me with tears in his eyes and said, with his bright frankness of manner, 'Thank you from my heart, Miss Dolby.' There must be many living now who remember that look of brightness. I shall never forget it. The Sacred Harmonic Society has

been my musical home, for I think I have never been absent from one of their concerts (except now and then through illness) whenever they have wanted my services, and they have done me the honour of engaging me for the contralto parts ever since I first began to sing there when quite a girl. In 1860 I was married to M. Sainton. I have never neglected my teaching all through my career." I am glad to reproduce in Madame Sainton's own words this unadorned record of a valuable artistic life, especially as it makes interesting reference to a great musical genius of whom, though much has been written, not too much is known.

JOSEPH BENNETT.

It is something new to learn that the use of the Royal Albert Hall is not granted for a concert if the date required be deemed too approximate to any date appropriated by the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society, and such concert be, therefore, calculated to affect the attendance at the Society's performance. Recent negotiations between Mr. George Watts, a well-known *entrepreneur*, and the Council of the Hall have revealed this to be the state of affairs, and, knowing so much, we would gladly know a little more. It would be interesting, for example, to learn what causes have led to Mr. Barnby's Choir being thus taken under the paternal wing of the authorities that govern the Albert Hall. Surely not weakness; the Society is flourishing, and at all points has little to fear from competition—a danger which hardly threatened in the present instance, seeing that Mr. Watts did not want to give an oratorio but a miscellaneous secular Concert with Madame Patti as the "star." More important still, perhaps, is it to discover by what oversight the directors of a great national building have been invested with the right to refuse the use of it, on any date for which it is not already engaged, to a respectable concert-giver who is willing to pay the stipulated terms and obey the recognized rules and by-laws. On this latter point we ask for an explanation with some emphasis, inasmuch as the anomaly which it involves will not, under pressure of public opinion, be permitted to exist very long. We do not grudge the Albert Hall Choral Society its special privileges, but we protest against their exercise at the expense of individuals who, at least, have an equal right to procure the same huge *locale*.

THE prospectus of the winter season of the Sacred Harmonic Society is prefaced by a warm expression of regret for the loss of the services of Mr. Charles Hallé as conductor, and of equally sincere hopefulness with regard to his successor, Mr. W. H. Cummings. Both of these sentiments will be fully shared by musical amateurs. Mr. Charles Hallé has been compelled to sever his long connection with the Society owing to the many calls upon his energies in the provinces and the consequent personal inconvenience of attending the rehearsals of the Society's concerts in London. That this should be so is, and yet is not, to be regretted; the loss to London is a gain to Liverpool and Manchester, and the Metropolis can well afford to be generous when it has such a thorough musician and skilful conductor as Mr. Cummings ready to take the vacant post. To use their own words, the Council "believe that in appointing Mr. Cummings they have best consulted the interests of the Society, and they look forward with confidence to a season which, for musical excellence, will be the equal in all respects

of its predecessors." This feeling of confidence will be participated in by the musical public; who will not readily forget the valuable services already rendered to the Society by the new conductor. Mr. Cummings will have to undergo severe tests, if the programme of the season be adhered to. Foremost in interest will be the production, on the 12th of February, of Gounod's new oratorio, *Mors et Vita*, and of hardly secondary importance will be the performance at the first concert, on the 20th of November, of the *XIXth Psalm*, by Saint-Saëns (the first time in England), and Sterndale Bennett's *Woman of Samaria*, which has hitherto not been included in the Society's repertory. *Belshazzar*, again, will be repeated at the last concert, on the 7th of May. The other works are comparatively familiar, being the *Messiah*, *Mount of Olives*, *Elijah*, *Creation*, *Martyr of Antioch*, and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. The list of artists is an excellent one. It includes, among others, Mesdames Anna Williams, Griswold, Annie Marriott, Clara Samuell, Hutchinson, Hilda Wilson and Patey, and Messrs. Lloyd, Maas, Winch, Foli and Santley. In conclusion, we cannot do better than reproduce the closing lines of the prospectus, in which the Council remind the public that the Society "is incorporated under Act of Parliament solely for the promotion of Musical Art, and that any excess of receipts over expenditure cannot be divided amongst the shareholders, but must be applied in furtherance of the objects of the Society, which has thus a special claim for support."

THE tour of Madame Christine Nilsson in her native land has been sorely clouded over by a dreadful calamity involving the loss of eighteen lives, and injury to many persons. It appears that Madame Nilsson took the unusual course of announcing that, after a concert in a public hall, she would sing from the balcony of her hotel. Naturally, the spectacle of a prima donna scattering her notes to be, in a manner, scrambled for, attracted a vast crowd, all bent upon gaining the best place for hearing and sight. The authorities, however, took no precautions to guard against the dangers inseparable from such a gathering, and the lamentable result was a pressure so fearful that many succumbed, and were helplessly trodden to death. So a great popular fête once more resolved itself into an occasion of mourning. Madame Nilsson, we hear, was deeply affected, as well she might have been, and has, for the present, suspended her concerts. No one will blame her in the matter, however much her extraordinary and sensational course may be regretted. She anticipated only the giving of public pleasure, and the receiving a public ovation. The fault lies entirely with the Stockholm authorities, who might easily have foreseen the inevitable risk, and guarded against it by the erection of a few strong and inexpensive barriers. While they are blamed, public sympathy divides itself between the artist by whom the catastrophe was unwittingly set in train, and the relatives of those who came to an untimely end.

THE programmes of the three Richter concerts on October 24th and November 3rd and 11th have now been issued. The symphonies will be the "Choral" of Beethoven, Schumann in D minor and Brahms No. 2. A sextet for strings and two horns will be played, and there will be lengthy excerpts from *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger*, and the *Ring des Nibelungen*, including the love duet from the first act of *Die Walküre*, to be sung by Madame Valleria and Mr. Lloyd.

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WILL COMMENCE ON
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6th, 1885.

Conductor - Mr. MICHAEL WATSON.

At the Piano - Miss ADELAIDE PALMER.

The Choir will meet for practice, every Tuesday Evening, from 7.30 to 9.30, excepting December 22nd and 29th, 1885, and January 5th, 1886, and Concerts, as at present arranged, will be given on

1885. MONDAY, November 30th (St. Andrew's Day),

Grand Scottish Festival, and Performance (first time) of "Aladdin."

1886. ASH-WEDNESDAY, March 10th,

Performance of Mackenzie's Oratorio, "The Rose of Sharon."

" GOOD FRIDAY, April 23rd,

Performance of Haydn's Oratorio, "The Creation."

At the Concerts given by the Society all the Members will take part, but it is intended to select Forty Voices to form a CONCERT CHOIR, which shall be available for Concerts generally.

LADIES and GENTLEMEN desirous of becoming either Active or Honorary Members are requested to communicate with Mr. MICHAEL WATSON, Roxburghle, (28), The Gardens, East Dulwich.

A. THACKRAH, Hon. Sec.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters connected with the literary department of this Journal must be addressed to the EDITOR.

Communications intended for insertion will receive no notice unless accompanied by the name and address of the sender.

The EDITOR cannot undertake to return articles of which he is unable to make use.

All business letters should be addressed to the PUBLISHERS.

Advertisements should reach the Office not later than the 20th in order to insure insertion in the issue of the month current.

Will Mr. Williams-Williams, the writer of some verses called "The Jester," published in THE LUTE a few months ago kindly send his address to the Editor?



THE LUTE.
LONDON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1885.

Two new enterprises in the region of executive music will mark the coming season. In common with all amateurs we welcome them both, and hope they may meet with the success they deserve. Novello's Oratorio concerts will prove specially acceptable, because, as the firm connected with them

LUT

ROBE

SOPRANO.

ALTO.

TENOR.

BASS.

PIANO.

PIANO.

PIANO.

PIANO.

PIANO.

PIANO.

PIANO.

PIANO.

P & W.

"LUTE" N° 34.

This Part-Song is published separately. PRICE 3d

TO HIS FRIEND, PERCY ADDLESHAW, ESQ.

"TO CARNATIONS," Part-Song.

Words by
ROBERT HERRICK.

Music by
WALTER HAY.

LONDON:

PATEY & WILLIS. 44, GT MARLBOROUGH ST, W.

The musical score consists of five staves. The top four staves represent the vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The bottom staff represents the piano accompaniment. The vocal parts sing a three-line melody, while the piano provides harmonic support with chords. The lyrics are as follows:

Soprano: Stay while ye will, or go

Alto: Stay while ye will, or go

Tenor: Stay while ye will, or

Bass: Stay while ye will, or

Piano (Accompaniment):

stay while ye will, or go And leave no
stay while ye will, or go no scent
go or go no scent
go And leave no scent be - hind.

LUTE NO: 34.

2

scent And leave... no scent be - hind ye, leave...
 leave no scent. be - hind... ye, And leave no
 leave no scent. be - hind... ye, no
 ye no scent be - hind... ye, no
 ... no scent be - hind ye, Stay... while ye will, or
 scent... be - hind ye, Stay while ye will, or
 scent... be - hind ye, Stay...
 scent be - hind ye,
 go... And leave no scent be - hind ye: no
 go... and leave no scent be - hind pp
 ... or go... and leave no
 Stay while ye will, or go, and

scent, no scent be - hind ye:
 ye: no scent be - hind ye:
 scent be - - hind ye:
 leave no scent be - hind ye: Yet trust me I shall
 Yet trust me I shall know the place where I may find ye
 Yet trust me I shall
 Yet trust me I shall know shall
 know the place where I may find ye. Yet trust me I shall
 Where. . . . I may find ye I may *rall:* find. ye:
 know the place where I may find ye: where I may *rall:* find. ye:
 know the place. . . . where I may *rall:* find. ye:
 know. . . where I may find ye: where I may *rall:* find. ye:

LUTE NO: 34.

4

Animato

With - in my Lu - cia's cheek (Whose li - ve
Animato
With - in my Lu - - - cias
Animato With - in my Lu - - - cias
With - in my Lu - - - cias
Animato With - in my Lu - - - cias
ry ye wear) With - in my
cheek (Whose li - ve - ry you wear) With - in
cheek (Whose li - ve - ry you wear)
cheek (Whose li - ve - ry you wear) With - in
rall:
Lu - cia's cheek (Whose li - ve - ry ye wear) . . .
my Lu - - - cia's cheek (Whose li - ve -
With in my Lu - cia's cheek (Whose *rall* li - ve -
my Lu - - - cia's cheek (Whose *rall* li - ve -

LUTE NO: 34.

Scherzo.

5

Play ye at hide or
Scherzo. Play ye at hide or
ry ye wear) Play ye at hide or
ry ye wear) Play ye at hide or
ry ye wear) Play ye at hide or seek, . . .

seek, Play ye at hide or seek I'm
seek, . . . Play ye at hide or seek I'm
seek, Play ye at hide or seek I'm
. . . Play ye at hide or seek, . . . I'm

sure to find ye cres: there . . .
sure to find ye cres: there . . .
sure to find ye cres: there . . .
sure to find ye there . . .

I'm sure to find to find ye
 I'm sure to find ye there I'm
 I'm sure to find ye there
 I'm sure to find ye there. I'm
 there... to find... ye there...
 sure... I'm sure to find ye there...
 I'm sure to find ye there...
 sure sure to find ye there...

publishes most of the new sacred works produced in England, there is good reason to expect that the bulk of our festival and other novelties will promptly be presented to Londoners. Of the excellence of the performances no doubt is possible. Principals, band and chorus will be of the best, while the name of Mr. A. C. Mackenzie, as conductor, guarantees a good ensemble. The programme of the opening season, which begins with the *Rose of Sharon*, could hardly be more interesting. The second enterprise—Brinsmead's Symphony concerts—proposes to work in quite another field. The projectors have secured the services of Mr. Mount as *chef d'orchestre*, and, no doubt, a capital band will be got together. Fuller particulars must appear before an estimate of prospects can be made, but hearty sympathy with honest effort is already assured from the mass of music-lovers. For ourselves, we are glad to see signs of reviving life in a branch of musical business that of late has greatly languished.

BUT for the Promenade concerts at Covent Garden, music in London—that is to say, good orchestral music—would, at this period of the year, be an altogether dead letter, as dead, in fact, as the season itself. So far these annual entertainments have been fulfilling their purpose in the efficient measure Mr. Gwyllim Crowe has accustomed us to expect. The programmes are compiled with a view to the satisfying of varied tastes, and the performances generally leave little room for complaint, if, indeed, they are not as a rule marked by considerable excellence. A nightly rendering for nearly two months of Mr. Crowe's new valse, "Fairy Voices," might, at first blush, seem to indicate a lack of modesty on the part of the composer of "See-saw," but the applause that invariably greets his composition forms a sufficient justification for its establishment as a permanent item. Amateurs, as a matter of course, find their chief, if not sole interest, in the so-called "classical" scheme presented on Wednesday evenings. We have known these schemes to be more eclectic in character than they are this year and to bring forward instrumental soloists of a higher average calibre. Still, the Wednesday concerts have been well attended, and on certain occasions works have been given that by their importance and attractiveness atoned for the presence of much inferior material. Such, for instance, were Hermann Goetz's Symphony in F, Dvôrak's Symphony in D, Raff's "Italian" Suite, and, quite lately, Mr. Ebenezer Prout's Birmingham Symphony, which, under the composer's direction, received an admirable interpretation and evoked a hearty repetition of the verdict that greeted it at the Festival. The vocal talent this season is quite up to the usual mark; to mention names would be to enumerate fully half the best known singers on the concert platform. During October there will, we understand, be two special concerts, at which Mr. Sims Reeves is to appear. In the course of the month, too, will be heard the overture that wins the prize of 25 guineas offered by Mr. Freeman Thomas for a work composed by a native of this country.

THAT best of all American musical journals, the *Keynote*, has been roused to savage sarcasm by the prospectuses already issued for next year's musical season in the United States. It announces, from statistics of greater or less accuracy, that the country will be over-run by one thousand and seven operatic companies, which will give opera in Italian, English (by kind permission of Miss Emma Abbott), German, French, Spanish, Hindoo, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Chinese, Hibernian (*sic*), Turkish,

African and legitimate American. In addition to operas, there will be some eight or ten thousand concert combinations which will drop down upon the land even as the famished locusts did upon Ancient Egypt. "If," says the writer, "these combinations do not destroy, root and branch, the musical vegetation in America, it will not be because their appetites are unequal to the emergency." The advice offered by the *Keynote* under these terrible circumstances is to "stand aloof" and let the hungry reapers gather in a harvest of much experience and more impecuniosity. We can sympathise with this desire to boycott, but we would temper it with counsel to "discriminate, discriminate, discriminate!"

"The Effects of Music upon the Palate and the Appetite" is a treatise that has yet to be written, but the foundation of the research from which it should be an outcome lies in a remarkable statement made by the keeper of a Chicago restaurant. Unlike most of his class, his powers of putting two and two together are not concentrated upon, or confined to, the score chalked upon the shutter. He has noticed that on certain evenings lager beer is in greater demand than champagne; that on other nights the thirst for Moët or Heidsieck carries all before it; and that at other times both articles of consumption will be put in the shade by the counter-attractions of ham-sandwiches. The observer is the discoverer. Mr. Theodore Thomas was running some concerts at the time, and the philosophic publican received from the circumstance one of those flashes of inspiration which come to ordinary men but once in a lifetime. The result is the following statement:—"On the nights when they play Wagner's music, I sell five times as much lager beer as usual. On Mendelssohn nights nobody wants any ham-sandwiches, and as I get 85 per cent. out of them, I guess I don't think much of Mr. Mendelssohn. Strauss is the composer to make the wine go off. A man feels well off when he listens to a waltz of Strauss's, and he orders his bottle of champagne freely." Here is a field for ingenuity! Are such phenomena the result of musical style in the abstract, or has genius the subtle power of communicating its own likings and prejudices to its hearers? If the latter, the idiosyncrasies of great composers might be imparted to their audience as need might warrant. Thus a man of feeble appetite would be enabled to eat a dinner plentiful enough for four by listening to the *Messiah*, and a confirmed atheist be cured of his infidelity by a steady course of Gounod. But the subject is too vast to receive full justice at our hands; we leave it to those who delight in philosophic speculation.

On the day preceding the first production of *The Huguenots* in Paris, Adolphe Crémieux gave a splendid and numerously attended breakfast party in honour of Meyerbeer, to which entertainment he invited the leading musical critics and composers of that day, assembled in the French capital for the express purpose of attending the long-expected *premiere*. Amongst Crémieux's guests was Gioachino Rossini, who occupied a place of honour next to the wife of his amphitryon, but refused, one after another, all the dainties offered to him in succession. Madame Crémieux noticed his unswerving abstinence with equal surprise and annoyance, and presently asked him whether he was unwell: "as he appeared to have suddenly lost an appetite which, as she had understood, was usually no less vigorous than lively." "That is quite true, my dear madam," replied Rossini; "but I never eat break-

fast, nor can I depart from that rule to-day, although, should anything go wrong with to-morrow night's performance, I know that Meyerbeer will believe to the day of his death that my refusal to partake of this feast brought him bad luck. The position I now occupy at your table reminds me of a quaint experience that befel me some years ago in a small provincial town of my native land. A performance of the *Barber* was being given to my special honour and glory in the local theatre. Whilst the overture was in full swing, I noticed a huge trumpet in the orchestra, manifestly blown with remarkable force and continuity by a member of the band; but not a sound in the least akin to the tones invariably produced by that class of instrument could I hear. During the wait at the close of the first act, I went round to the conductor and asked him to explain to me the special purpose of the noiseless trumpet, which, I confessed, was to me an absolute and somewhat surprising novelty. He answered, blushing to the roots of his hair: 'Maestro, in this our town there is not a living soul, man, woman or child, who knows how to play the trumpet. Therefore I specially engaged an artist to hold one up to his lips, binding him by a solemn oath not to blow into it; for it looks well to have a trumpeter in a theatrical orchestra.' I am like that man with the trumpet. I may not eat; but I look well at your breakfast table.'

AN Italian musical cotemporary guarantees the authenticity of the following anecdote, which tempts us to revive the old jesting paraphrase of a familiar Ausonian saying—"Se non è Verdi, è ben Trovatore." It professes to narrate the circumstances attending the genesis of the famous *Miserere* in the fourth act of Verdi's most popular opera, and runs as follows:—"Week after week the *maestro* brooded, in vain endeavour to hatch a melody that should combine sadness with dignity. Fruitlessly he sat through long, lonely winter nights at his pianoforte, and meditated. All unsuccessfully he sought in his memories of a sorrowful past for some painful remembrance, some grievous thought that might suggest a musical expression of the feeling to which he wished to give melodic utterance. All his efforts were to no purpose. The inspiration was lacking. His creative faculty was at a stand-still. Discouragement befel him, and he ceased to work. One morning, however, he was suddenly summoned to the death-bed of an old friend, who had for many years been faithful to him in joy and sorrow—in prosperity and adversity. When he looked upon the dying man, Verdi's grief was so violent that he experienced a choking sensation. He would fain have wept; but his emotion was so intense and absorbing that it would not permit a single tear to flow and yield him solace. This paroxysm of sorrow was too vehement for long endurance; he felt that it must be ended somehow, or he would surely suffocate. So he went into the apartment adjoining the dying man's bedroom. There stood a piano. Obeying an irresistible impulse, Verdi opened the instrument, sate down before it, and gave vent to his feelings through his fingers, with the result that he forthwith extemporised the touching, passionate, and stately *Miserere* which has immortalised the catastrophe of *Il Trovatore*. Having invented this admirable melody, the composer wept copiously. Sorrow had at once fertilized his imagination and opened the flood-gates of his eyes." We regret the circumstance that our Florentine colleague's literary style, at once richly florid and impressively emphatic, necessarily suffers by the process of translation. As he tells the above story in its original Italian, it is simply inimitable.

THREE CHOIRS' FESTIVAL, HEREFORD.

THE late Earl Russell once pithily said, "To stand still really means to go back," a remark certainly appropriately expressive in matters appertaining to musical festivals. We fear the effort to continue

"Climbing the climbing wave"

is imperative, and the Three Choirs' Festival, if it desire to stand unflinchingly the fierce light of the criticism of to-day, must supply an instance of disregard to the query of the *Lotus Eaters*. So far as the celebration under review is concerned, its aims and achievements, its promises and fulfilments are now matters of history, and let us hope that the obvious lessons gleaned therefrom will in due course not pass unregarded. The temptation to enlarge on the legislation for this Festival is almost irresistible, but as neither time nor space serve, I take refuge in a safe and at the same time a well-deserved word of congratulation to the executive on the aggregate results and pass at once to the Festival itself. Monday morning and afternoon were absorbed with a rehearsal, and in common fairness to Dr. Langdon Colborn, the conductor, I am bound to give him credit for the business-like tact with which he dismissed the real hard work of these rehearsals. Certainly he had a strong phalanx in front of the dais, for the rank and file of his players included the flower of English orchestral men, and his choir—cathedral men and a powerful Yorkshire contingent—evidently knew all works well. By noon, the *Redemption* and Dvôrak's *Stabat Mater* had been tried over, and after the adjournment Bach's "A stronghold sure" and the knotty points of "*The Last Judgment*" finished this part of the task. The evening was occupied with the *Song of Balder* (Harford Lloyd) and Dr. Smith's *St. Kevin*, both of which will presently be alluded to. After the sermon by the Rev. Prebendary Poole, who preached on the text, "That which was lacking to me, the brethren supplied," the *Elijah* was given as the opening oratorio, and its "fixity of tenure" was proved beyond a demonstration by its reception and the tangible results to the exchequer of the Festival. With the mention that Miss Anna Williams and Madame Albani divided the soprano solos; Madame Enriquez and Madame Patey shared the contralto music; and that Mr. Edward Lloyd and Mr. Santley assumed responsibilities in the oratorio, the performance must be dismissed with the brief criticism, "extremely satisfactory in each and every department." In the evening of the same day, the first of the miscellaneous concerts was held in the Shire Hall. Its novelty, *St. Kevin*, naturally demands a little more than a passing allusion. I do not propose to inflict even a sketch of the plot of this extraordinary work upon the readers of THE LUTE. With the short *précis* that it narrates the escapades of a young lady, Kathleen by name, who,

"Loved not wisely but too well,"

and who paid the penalty of death at the hands of her inamorata, and the doing of this self-elected executioner St. Kevin, and his finally successful efforts to escape the entanglements of this "sinned against" Circe, I leave Mr. Gerald Griffin and his strophes. In justice, however, to the poet, I must not omit saying that Dr. Joseph Smith accepts the soft impeachment that a little carpentry might be discovered in the lyrics as presented on the pages of the cantata. *Inter alia* in his own preface he says, "The poem" (named by its author, "The fate of

Kathleen,") was not originally intended for musical treatment. Bearing this fact in mind I have felt justified in occasionally modifying the text to a small extent." As to the musical setting, that may be crystallized in a single phrase, a mixture of crude and meaningless cacophony. The instrumentation exhibits neither "rhyme nor reason," and the vocal writing is marred by restless tonality. Dr. Smith is young, and if he will keep in curb that readiness "to protest too much" with his scoring, which may, unchecked, prove a fatal facility, he may, perhaps, produce something fit to listen to. That the production of *St. Kevin* was a mistake on the part of the management, and an unwise step on the part of the author, cannot be gainsaid. On the general question of the insertion of fresh works, one is bound to say a word on the jealousy with which such honours should be guarded. One of the "blue ribbons" of art is to get a commission to write for a festival, and, although to a certain extent, even with tried and experienced hands, the choice may rest until the eve of the event in the category as "a dark horse," disastrous results should never occur. Plainly, *St. Kevin* was unworthy a place in the Hereford programme, and its insertion stopped the way of a better work. As to Dr. Smith himself, as has before been hinted, he has the world before him, and may be disposed to try again. If he possesses the real grit of a musician he need not be absolutely crushed by his Hereford experience. In his case it may be that

"Sweet are the uses of adversity."

Let us hope that the time will come when musically he will be "clothed and in his right mind."

The rest of the concert was of the usual miscellaneous type, and the audience was played out with the Tannhäuser march and chorus, "Hail, bright abode."

The Redemption was given on Wednesday morning and it may be worth remarking that three of the principal artists were associated in the memorable Birmingham presentation three years ago, viz., Madame Patey, Mr. Edward Lloyd, and Mr. Santley. Their work was splendidly rendered, and Miss Anna Williams, who had to run the gauntlet of inevitable comparison with Madame Albani, acquitted herself admirably in "From Thy Love as a Father." In the incidental trio, "The Lord is risen again," Miss Hilda Coward, a *débutante* at the Festival of whom certainly more will be heard some day, created a distinctly favourable impression.

In the evening of the second day Spohr's *Last Judgment* and Bach's "A Stronghold Sure" were given in the Cathedral. In the five-and-fifty years of its lease of life here, the *Last Judgment* has not figured so frequently on festival schemes as its great beauties and sterling merit demand. However, to the credit of the Hereford executive be it said that the name of Spohr was by them honoured on September the ninth, and a large, reverent and attentive audience endorsed the wisdom of the choice of "Die Letzen Dinge." When I state that Madame Albani, Madame Patey, Mr. E. Lloyd, and Mr. Santley sang the solos, further mention is unnecessary. For Bach's work, the additional accompaniments by M. Otto Goldschmidt were used. Thursday morning saw Dvôrák's *Stabat Mater* produced for the first time at Hereford, and Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*, which formed the complement of the programme, supplied a useful and instructive antithesis to the piece by the marvellous Czech musician.

The evening concert of the same day contained as one of its attractions an unpretentious but clever little work by Mr. Harford Lloyd, *The Song of Balder*. Mr. Weatherley, who collaborates with Mr. Lloyd, says in his

argument: "Balder, the God of Light, Peace and Day, was slain by Höder, the blind God of Darkness and Night. But from the sleep of death he awoke again, and came to gladden the world with his presence. So runs the legend, and by reference to the phenomena of day and night the interpretation is easy. Balder is Day, slain by Höder, Night; and the return of Balder is simply the coming of Dawn."

Mr. Lloyd can be credited with a valuable addition to this class of cantata. He succeeds because having a brief message to deliver he says what he has to say, and then sensibly leaves off. Any attempt at over-elaboration, or the least suspicion of undue prolongation, would have been a fatal mistake. Briefly in this we see an instance of how a man may approach greatness even "in small things," and finally if he had given to the world nothing else than the *Song of Balder*, he would have demonstrated his claim to a place in the Festival scheme. The composer was indebted, first, to Miss Anna Williams for a capital rendering of the solo; secondly, to the chorus for some excellent singing in the concerted parts, and finally to the band for the judicious care with which the accompaniments were played. An effective part song for eight-part chorus, *Twilight*, written by Mr. Williams, the organist of Gloucester Cathedral, won hearty recognition, its just due, in the second half of the concert. Friday morning was devoted to *The Messiah* and a chamber concert, at which Messrs. Carrodus, Val, Nicholson, Ould, &c., appeared with Miss Hilda Coward, Madame Enriquez, and Mr. Kearton, wound up the proceedings on Friday night. Dr. Colborne made an excellent conductor, and he received valuable help from Mr. Carrodus his *chef d'attaque*.

S. LOCKER.

FROM THE PROVINCES.

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ABERDARE.—The Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales held here on the 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th August, is likely to result in a financial success. The expenditure was about £2,900, and the total receipts from all sources were about £3,100, as ascertained in the middle of September. The visitors at the Eisteddfod meetings and evening concerts on the four days referred to, numbered 32,000. The leading artistes were:—Miss Mary Davies, Miss Annie Marriott, Madame Lizzie Williams, Miss Eleanor Rees, Madame Williams-Penn, Miss Spencer Jones, Miss Katherine James, Miss Blodwen Jones, Mr. Ben. Davies, Eos Morlais, Mr. Dyfed Lewys, Mr. Lucas Williams, Mr. Bridson (London), and Mr. Daniel Price; penillion singer, Eos Dar; harpists, Mr. John Thomas, harpist to Her Majesty the Queen, and Dr W. F. Frost, Cardiff; and pianists, Mrs. Frost, Professor A. N. James and Mr. Richard Howell. The Aberdare Choral Union (conducted by Mr. Rees Evans) was engaged at a cost of £100 to render assistance from time to time. Among the chief musical events on the first day (Sir George Elliot, M.P., presiding), was the adjudication on the string quartette in four movements. The prize of £20, given by the National Eisteddfod Association, was awarded by Dr. Stainer and Mr. J. Thomas to Mr. J. T. Rees, Aberystwith. The brass band competition (adjudicators Mr. J. Thomas, Mr. Turpin and Caradog), resulted in the first prize of £20 being awarded to Swansea Resident Band, and the second of £10 to the Mountain Ash Band, and in the glee competition (male voices), a prize of £20 was divided between Aberdare and Rhymney Choirs (20-25 voices). There was a miscellaneous Concert

in the evening, Archdeacon Griffiths presiding. On the second day (Mr. J. C. Parkinson, president), a prize of 10 guineas was awarded to Mr. J. H. Roberts, Carnarvon, for the best anthem composition. The Choral competition ("Autumn Song," Mendelssohn, and "The Bells," Dr. Parry), prize £20, resulted in the success of Mr. J. H. Roberts. In the evening, Mr. W. Thomas, Aberdare, presided, and a capital performance of Handel's *Samson* was given. On the third day the attendance, in spite of the inclement weather, was exceedingly large, and great inconvenience was occasioned in the streets of the town owing to the press of visitors. Lord Aberdare presided at the Eisteddfod meeting. The grand choral competition took place on this occasion. Choirs of not less than 150 and not more than 200 voices competed for a prize of £150 and a bâton to the successful conductor, the test pieces being "Hark! the deep tremendous voice" (Haydn), "Beloved Lord, Thine eyes we close" (Spohr), and "Vengeance arise" (D. Jenkins). Six choirs competed, and the adjudicators (Mr. J. Thomas, Mr. Turpin, Caradog, Dr. Frost, and Mr. W. Jarrett Roberts) awarded the prize to the Dowlais Harmonic Society (Mr. Dan Davies conductor). In the evening, the president was Mr. Lewis Davis, Ferndale, and Mackenzie's *Rose of Sharon* was rendered. On the fourth day, Colonel Kemeys Tynte presiding, the second choral competition (choirs 80 to 150 voices) took place for a prize of £40. Five societies competed, and victory fell to Mountain Ash, Dowlais and Aberaman choirs being favourably mentioned. A miscellaneous concert in the evening (Mr. Marchant Williams in the chair) brought the proceedings to a close. The next Eisteddfod takes place at Carnarvon, and that of 1887 will be held in London.

GLASGOW.—The forthcoming season of the Glasgow Choral Union is again to be a ten week's one. It begins on Tuesday evening, 8th December, when Mr. A. C. Mackenzie will conduct his own work, *The Rose of Sharon*. The arrangements for this performance are on the most complete scale, nothing has been grudged the popular Scotchman, and he has, practically, had his own selection of soloists. Those include Madame Albani and Mr. Edward Lloyd. The other choral works to be found in the Committee's scheme comprise Handel's *Messiah* (1st January, 1886), Costa's *Eli* (21st January), and Dvôrak's new Cantata *The Spectre's Bride* (11th February). The Orchestral Concerts will be nine in number. These take place, as before, on the Tuesday evenings, and the programmes will include several important novelties. The usual Popular Concerts will be given on the Saturday evenings during the season. Mr. August Manns returns as conductor, to the satisfaction of his many friends both in Glasgow and Edinburgh. He will again have under his bâton an orchestra of eighty performers. The list of soloists is not finally made up, but engagements, up to date, have been effected with Mesdames Valleria, Hutchinson, Clara Samuel, Hilda Wilson, Kleeberg and Anna Mehlig; Messrs. Maas, Mills, Foli, Ludwig and Carrodus. In addition to the usual engagements at Edinburgh, the orchestra will visit several leading Scotch towns, and more particularly Greenock, a burgh which has at length awakened from a long sleep. Three concerts will be given there, and it is to be hoped that the spirited promoters will be duly encouraged.—Mr. James Airlie, the experienced Secretary to the Glasgow Abstainers' Union, has "booked" several important engagements for his season—the thirty-second—which opened on 19th September. Those City Hall Saturday-evening concerts are an interesting factor in Glasgow

musical life, they have, in the past, done a great deal of good amongst the masses, and from time to time the leading artistes of the day can be heard at an amazingly small cost.—Mr. Millar-Craig, of Edinburgh, succeeds the late Mr. James Allan as conductor of the "Glasgow Select Choir."—The Richter Concerts, announced for the 27th and 30th October, promise well, a gratifying response having already been made to Herr Franke's circular. Many of the best seats are, indeed, secured. The programmes, it may be mentioned, include the Wagnerian selections in which the famous Viennese conductor has made his most important mark on the concert platform. On the evening of the 30th inst. the "Glasgow Society of Musicians" entertain Herr Richter in the Queen's Rooms. Mr. Julius Seligmann, the genial President of the Club, takes the chair, and the company promises to be a large and influential one.—The Paisley Choral Union will shortly announce their scheme for next season. It will include the following, viz.:—A miscellaneous programme on the evening of Friday, 27th November, when Madame Marie Röze and Miss Dickerson will sing; an Orchestral Concert in December, with Mr. Manns and the band of the Glasgow Choral Union; the *Elijah* in January, also under Mr. Manns; and Mr. Fred Cowen's Birmingham success, *The Sleeping Beauty*, in April next. I must congratulate the Paisley folks on their enterprise. In spite of somewhat discouraging financial support in the past, the management have not by any means lost heart. All success then, to the coming season.

LIVERPOOL.—The Philharmonic Society opened their season last Tuesday. The principal item in the programme was Beethoven's Symphony, No. 8, in F. Mendelssohn's psalm, *Hear my prayer*, was also given, together with a Pianoforte Concerto in D Minor by the same master, and some minor works. Madame Biro de Marion and Mr. Clifford Hallé were the vocalists, and Mr. Charles Hallé conducted, as he will throughout the season, in addition to providing the pianoforte soli. At the second concert on October 13th, Haydn's Symphony in C (*L'Ours*), will be performed, and Madame Norman-Néruda will play a Violin Concerto in G Minor by Max Bruch, the late conductor for the Society. Mr. Edward Lloyd will be the vocalist. The programmes for the remainder of the season are not yet definitely arranged, but in the draft we are promised among the more important items, Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*; Handel's *Belshazzar* and *Messiah*; Haydn's *Creation*; and Schubert's *Song of Miriam*. Symphonies by Spohr (No. 5, in C Minor); Dvôrak; Mozart (in E flat); Schumann (*The Rhine*, in E flat); and by Beethoven (No. 4, in B flat), are also promised, and a rich selection of orchestral pieces. The principal vocalists engaged are Mrs. Hutchinson, Miss Anna Williams, Miss Hilda Wilson, Mrs. Henschell, Miss Griswold, Madame Patey, Miss Maria de Lido, and Miss Mary Davies; and Messrs. Ludwig, Santley, Maas, Henschell, Piercy, Harper Kearton, and Bridson. Mons. de Pachmann will provide a pianoforte Concerto at one of the concerts; Mons. Anton Dubrucq an oboe Solo, and Señor Sarasate will also appear. The scheme as it stands is an extremely varied and well-arranged one, but throughout the whole series of concerts there does not appear the name of a single English composer. The Teutons are hugely preponderate, and the French masters have a very full share of attention. After the triumphs of Mackenzie, Prout, Cowen, Stanford, Dr. Bridge and others at recent festivals, we find the leading musical organization in the second city of the empire putting forward a scheme for a series of twelve concerts consisting wholly of alien

names!—The sub-committee which will take charge of the musical arrangements for the International Exhibition of Shipping in Liverpool next year is already at work, and seeing that its principal members will be gentlemen so well known in musical circles as are Mr. Palgrave Simpson, Mr. James Marke Wood and Mr. H. E. Kensburg, there can be no doubt that a high average of merit will be attained in this department. The question of providing suitable military bands will be a weighty one, as the cost of travelling will be a very serious consideration in bringing over any of the London regimental bands; but it may be pointed out that Manchester at present possesses, in the band of the 4th Dragoon Guards, a musical organization superior, perhaps, to any other in the army, with the exception of those attached to the Household Brigades. Colonel Shaw-Hellier has for very many years taken an intense and cultivated interest in the band, and that the result is fully commensurate, residents in Brighton, where the regiment was last quartered, will cheerfully testify. The question of erecting an organ in the buildings is also under consideration, and it may be suggested to the Committee that *al fresco* concerts would be—subject to the weather—an agreeable and popular novelty.—The various ambitious orchestral services which have been rendered at the church of St. Francis Xavier, under the direction of Mr. John Ross, having proved so artistically successful, a small but highly efficient professional orchestra has been formed which will permanently sustain this important portion of the service. The result of this experiment will be looked forward to with much interest, and it is to be hoped that it may considerably aid in the development, or rather, the revival of that portion of the service of God which has for too long been sadly neglected.

MERTHYR.—On the last day of August a complimentary concert of a high-class character was given at the Drill Hall, to Mr. J. Vaughan, in recognition of his many services as leader of local choirs. There was a crowded attendance. Miss Mary Davies, as soprano, was very well received, her voice being heard to considerable advantage, especially in Macfarren's "Pack clouds away," in which the pianoforte accompanist was Miss Meta Scott and the flautist Mr. Fred. Griffiths. The song named was rendered by Miss Davies in response to an *encore*. Miss Marian Price, R.A.M., mezzo-soprano, sang with much tenderness and general artistic effect, "Heaven and Earth" (Pinsuti) and other songs. As in the case of the soprano vocalist she was recalled on several occasions, and bouquets were presented to her. Miss Scott, as a pianist and violinist, won golden opinions, and Mr. Fred. Griffiths' performances on the piccolo were exquisite. Mr. Ben. Davies sang "Come into the garden, Maud," "Once Again," and other songs in characteristic style, but the effects of a cold, which prevented him carrying out all his concert engagements in connection with the National Eisteddfod at Aberdare in the previous week, had not wholly passed off. Mr. Lucas Williams, as a bass soloist, was quite equal to himself. In "I fear no foe," "Le Frai Ceppi," "The Postilion," and other airs, he was very effective. Each of the *artistes* named were deservedly applauded with vigour, and in several cases they responded to the *encores*. Mr. E. Lawrence, Merthyr, was the general conductor of the arrangements.

[The Editor will be obliged to Conductors or Secretaries of Musical Societies if they will kindly send programmes and notes of concerts on or before the 24th day of the month. The notices should be brief and to the point, the names of artists distinct and legible, and the whole written on one side of the paper only.]

FROM THE CONTINENT.

— O —

ANTWERP.—The Exhibition has been the occasion of procuring for us a series of the most enjoyable concerts. These were led off by Riva Berni, a Russian pianist, who displayed a wonderful command of technique. Saint-Saëns played, amongst other pieces, his "Rhapsodie d'Auvergne," at a grand concert got up by the Société de Musique, and he also directed the performance of his newly-composed "Hymn to Victor Hugo," which was received with great applause. At a second grand concert, under the auspices of the same society, Franz Wüllner, of Cologne, assumed the conductor's baton, the programme being composed exclusively of German works, which seemed to be very highly appreciated. The city is crowded with vocal and instrumental performers from all parts of the world.

BAYREUTH.—There have been such a number of false rumours put into circulation respecting the conference between some leading members of the musical profession, which has lately been held here, that it may perhaps be as well to give you the actual facts. The question submitted for discussion was the arrangement of the festival programme to be performed in July, 1886, and the decision arrived at was that sixteen to eighteen representations should take place, at which *Parsifal* and *Tristan and Isolde* are to be given. Levy will direct the performances of the former, whilst Richter and Mottl are alternately to superintend the latter. It may be looked upon, as finally settled, that Frau Cosima will decline in any way to depart from the wishes of her late husband; there is therefore no chance of an assent to Neumann's application to be allowed to produce *Parsifal* on any German stage—much less that the piece shall be performed anywhere out of Germany.

BERLIN.—We are to have an Italian opera season, during the months of October and November, Kroll's theatre having been engaged by the impresario Strakosch, the representations to consist alternately of dramatic and lighter works. At the Opera House, Wagner's *Siegfried* is being diligently rehearsed, and in order to render the performance as exactly similar as possible in all respects to that in Munich, Herr Radecke, the leader of the orchestra here, has been dispatched to the Bavarian capital to attend the representation of the work at the place of its inception. The *Cloches de Corneville*—with which the Walhalla opened its doors after the summer holidays—met with a very favourable reception on the first night, and it was also very well spoken of by the press; but, what is probably more to the purpose from a managerial point of view, the applications for seats in advance have been so numerous that the piece is likely to retain its place on the playbills for some time to come.—At the Victoria Theatre the spectacular ballet of *Messalina* was made use of as the opening piece, and, no expense having been spared in getting up the *mise-en-scène*, it proved a great success.

BRUSSELS.—The Conservatoire has recently suffered severe loss in the death of two of its leading masters. Joseph Servais, professor of the violoncello, who had made it his chief object to associate selected performers for playing the trios and quartettes at the grand operatic performances of the school, was only 35 years of age when he suddenly fell back lifeless at the supper-table, and Jules di Zaremski, a famous pianist and pupil of Liszt, has just died, also suddenly, in his 34th year, whilst on a visit to his parents in Zitomir (Russia).

CARLSRUHE.—The gala performances at the Theatre in honour of the visit of H.M. the Emperor of Germany, were a great success. The piece given was the opera *Noah*, of which the composition was commenced by Halévy, and, after his death, brought to a conclusion by Bizet, the author of *Carmen*. It was a first performance in a two-fold sense of the word; for not only was it the first time of production in the town itself, but it was, moreover, the first time the piece had been given in Germany at all. The view presented by the house was, as usual on such occasions on the Continent, one blaze of colour, in consequence of the numerous uniforms present. The orchestra burst forth with the National Anthem, and the whole assembly rose to its feet in respectful salutation as the aged Emperor entered his box, attended by his daughter, the Grand Duchess of Baden, and his granddaughter. Prince Henry, who had been obliged to return to Kiel to resume his naval duties, was absent from the Royal party; but his place was occupied by the Crown Prince of Sweden, who appeared in the uniform of the Prussian Dragoons.

EUTIN.—About two years ago a committee was formed here for the purpose of collecting subscriptions towards erecting a memorial to Carl Maria von Weber, on the occasion of the centenary of his birthday. As *Der Freischütz* is known and appreciated almost everywhere, and as various exalted Germans, as well as foreign personages, were said to look upon the project with favour, it was not anticipated that any difficulty would occur in raising the funds; the only question was the form which the memorial should take. Two schemes were mooted. The least expensive was to purchase the house in which the composer was born, and to erect a statue to his memory—which it was estimated would cost about £2,500. The more ambitious project was to erect a building to be devoted to art purposes, and containing a large concert-room to be named after the deceased—this would probably cost £10,000. The amount at present actually subscribed—after two years—amounts to £400!

LEIPZIG.—A new opera has just been brought out at the town theatre here, entitled *Das Andreasfest*. The story may be summed up as follows:—The two journeymen of the armourer and burgomaster (Ulram) of Innsbruck are both in love with their master's lovely daughter Agnes. Of course the parent favours the suit of Adam, who is rich and cunning: whilst the damsel has given her heart to Walter. Adam succeeds, by betraying the lover's secret to the father, in getting Walter turned out of the house and forbidden ever to think of Agnes again. It is, however, an old custom of the town that, on St. Andrew's festival (*Das Andreasfest*), every journeyman has a right to raffle for his sweetheart. Walter, contrary to her wish, raffles with Adam for Agnes, and wins her; but she now refuses to belong to him. Aggravated by Adam, Walter draws his sword, thereby inflicting a slight wound on Agnes, for which (this having happened on the feast day) he is charged with a breach of the public peace, and is proclaimed an outlaw. Whilst wandering about the country he saves the life of the Emperor, who had lost his way amidst some dangerous precipices; and driven by a desire to see his beloved Agnes again, he comes into the town, where he is recognised and is being taken off to prison, when the Emperor pardons him, and unites the lovers, after having knighted his preserver. The music—as it must be now-a-days in Germany if it is to give satisfaction—is very Wagnerian; but in Wagner's best style. Moreover, the choruses are very

effective, and as a whole the work is one which is likely to find its way on to other than German stages. Christine Nilsson is expected to give a concert here on 26th October, an event looked forward to with no little interest in musical circles, as she has so seldom appeared in Germany.

MUNICH.—The directors of the Court Theatre have recently promulgated two regulations which possess a more than local interest. The first is that, the number of solo performers having been largely increased, there will now be a more frequent interchange of parts; and the directors express a hope that no one will see cause to take offence at, or any loss of dignity in this step, which has been taken solely in the interests of the public, to prevent the necessity for altering the published programme in case a particular actor should be prevented from appearing. The second refers to the throwing of bouquets, wreaths, &c., which is only to be permitted on certain special occasions, distinctly enumerated in the regulation.

PARIS.—The main object which managers seek to attain during the ensuing season, seems to be not only how many novelties they can produce, but how far the patience of their audience will submit to be tested by the length of the pieces. Thus the Châtelet has a spectacular novelty, with twenty scenes, and the Gaieté has secured a piece called *Petit Ponce*, in which there are thirty! The Press is diligently engaged in puffing Massenet's new opera, *The Cid*, and it would be surprising—considering how great a favourite with the public the author is—if they did otherwise; but even should the work prove a success, it can hardly be looked upon as a novelty, as the theme has been dealt with no less than sixteen times—Handel produced his *Roderigo* at Florence in 1709. The Bouffes Parisiennes is to be converted into a hotel; but its loss will scarcely create a blank, as there are three other large theatres devoted to the performance of operettas.

ST. PETERSBURG.—Hans von Bülow is coming here at the end of November to conduct the series of ten concerts to be given this winter by the Imperial Russian Musical Society; by the terms of his contract he is himself bound to perform twice during the progress of the series. The Russian national singer, Donitri Glaviansky d'Agrenoff, is about to leave us for a time, in order to take his company, consisting of 50 performers (ladies, gentlemen, and boys), on a tour throughout Europe, in the course of which he will go to London.

NOTHING is as yet settled between Mr. Carl Rosa and Mr. Augustus Harris as to next year's season of English opera at Drury Lane. The company has meanwhile been doing great things in the provinces.

MADAME THÉO, the well-known *opéra-bouffe* singer, had a narrow escape for her life a few days ago. She was driving from her residence in the Place du Théâtre Français to attend a rehearsal of the *Petit Chaperon Rouge* at the Nouveautés Theatre, when at the corner of the Avenue de l'Opéra, the horses took fright and bolted. Madame Théo lost her presence of mind and leaped from the carriage while it was going at full speed. She sustained severe injuries according to one account, cutting a vein in the left wrist and nearly breaking three fingers of her right hand. Fortunately she suffered no disfigurement in the face, and is expected to be perfectly well at the end of a fortnight.

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REVIEWS.

J. CURWEN AND SONS.

The Church Choralist. Parts I. and II.

In this work an effort is made to supply Church choirs with anthems of an easy character. We confess to knowing very little of the gentlemen whose names are given as composers, but that may be our own fault, and is certainly not the main question. Mr. W. H. Sudds has contributed largely to the contents; Mr. G. B. Allen, B. F. Gilbert, and the American, Mr. Dudley Buck, also figure in the list, as do Mr. Minshall of the City Temple, and Mr. Ambroise Davenport. Much of the music may be described as commonplace, saying what has to be said quite grammatically but using very ordinary forms and familiar inflections. There are, however, exceptions to this rule in number sufficient to make the work valuable in its particular sphere. It will certainly be welcomed by a host of choirs whose means are limited. We may add that the subjects of the Anthems are sufficiently varied for the purposes of the Christian year.

School Cantatas. *The Babes in the Wood.* By A. J. Foxwell and Josiah Booth.

WE have here a dramatised version of the pathetic old story beloved by children of all growths. The lines of the legend are closely observed, and the dialogue is carried on in easy, flowing verse of a suitably unpretending character. In setting the little drama to music for children, the composer necessarily confined himself within narrow bounds. He has, however, done well. The music is melodious, and does not lack varied expression. It is interesting, moreover, as children find interest in such things. If a school cantata be wanted, here is one which we take upon ourselves to recommend.

The Choral Handbook. (No. 131.) *The Message.* Words by Adelaide Proctor. Music by Alfred J. Caldicott, Mus. Bac., Cantab.

MR. CALDICOTT, though adopting another form, was bold to set the words to which Blumenthal's music is inseparably allied. The effect of reading his part-song is somewhat odd, since each line brings a phrase of Blumenthal to mind and sets it jostling with Mr. Caldicott's music in the most confusing fashion. If, however, one can contrive to exorcise Blumenthal, it is quickly seen that the Albert Palace conductor sustains his reputation in this case as in so many others. The new "Message," indeed, is very clever, and not less admirable for the true feeling to which it gives unforced expression.

It may be of advantage to add that choral societies in even an elementary stage of training will experience no difficulty in reading the music.

FRANCIS ORR AND SONS, GLASGOW.

The Standard Series of School Songs. (No. 1.) Stranged for three equal voices. By James Allen (late Conductor of the Glasgow Select Choir) and Alexander Patterson (of the Glasgow Select Choir).

ALTHOUGH this is but the first of a series, the publishers announce on its cover that death has removed the principal editor, Mr. Allan, while, as yet, he was in the midst of life. The deceased gentleman had many friends in London, who will look with pathetic interest upon this beginning of a labour destined so soon to end. Mr. Patterson, presumably, will carry on the work, which, though unpretending, is of importance in its way.

Music is certain to fill a larger space in elementary education than it does now, and a need exists to supply children with compositions adapted to form their taste upon a good model. This series, judging by its earliest instalment, will help to meet the want, inasmuch as the popular melodies chosen are harmonised in a musicianly manner, care being taken to make real part-songs of them, that is to say pieces in which each part is a melody rather than a mere constituent in the filling up of chords. The multiplication of expression marks appears to us in some cases overdone, and likely to favour the mechanical expressiveness which is almost worse than none at all.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

Four Two-part songs, with Pianoforte Accompaniment. Composed by Charles Vincent, Mus. Doc., Oxon. I. *Bright Summer.* II. *Thoughts of Home.* III. *The Sailor's Lullaby.* IV. *A Holiday.*

THESE little works are studiously simple, and in fettering his muse to make them so, Dr. Vincent has not always successfully avoided common-place. No. 1 is decidedly common-place. No. 2 is much superior in every respect; the parts being distinct, and the expression happily suited to the words. No. 3 is very pleasing; and No. 4 has merit, if it be not evenly sustained throughout. That these part-songs will prove acceptable for home use cannot, for a moment be doubted; but, should the composer add to their number, he might profitably devote his attention to the infusion of a little more individuality—a result not incompatible with the restrictions imposed by the scope and character of such works.

E. DONAJOWSKI.

I. *Minuet in D.* II. *Alla Marcia in C.* Composed for the Organ by D. R. Munro.

THE Minuet is pretty, and something more—that is to say, it contains as much of musicianship as can be infused into so simple and restricted a form. Its beginning in the relative minor is by no means one of the least successful devices. The Alla Marcia is, perhaps, less distinctive, but supplies an effective piece for use on joyous occasions. It presents no difficulty to organists of even moderate skill.

HART AND CO.

The Bell Tower. A Cantata for treble and alto voices. Composed for the use of Schools. Words by G. H. Giddins. Music by George Shinn, Mus. Bac. Cantab.

MUSIC of this particular class should be noticed only with a view to its suitability for the end in view. A good composer, however, can put the mark of his excellence upon even the lowliest kind of work. Mr. Shinn has done so in the present case. His music is simple and easy, but it is well written and carries with it the interest inseparable from an exercise of talent. The Cantata might be put into children's hands with positive advantage to their taste.

MEDICAL BATTERY COMPANY (LIMITED).

The Lost Voice. (A Song of the Ammoniaphone.) Words by Percy G. Mocatta. Music by Alfred Allen.

BY means of a story which tells how a lovesick youth who had lost his voice won his bride after a course of the Ammoniaphone, Dr. Carter Moffatt's famous invention receives a novel kind of advertisement. The idea is a good one, and poet and composer have combined to work it out well.

POET'S CORNER.

—O—
“THE NIGHT IS DEPARTING.”

 DOVE, fond Dove,
(Thus sang he in the morning light)
On swift wing hie away—
Full short is the winter day—
And tell my love,
Oh! softly tell my love,
To watch the east for the rising bright
Of a sun that never shall set in night.

O Dove, sweet Dove,
(Thus sang she in the evening gray)
Come soon, or come too late
To carry a message of fate—
To tell my love,
Ah! sadly tell my love,
I look no more for a shining ray
On the Orient hills; 'tis night alway.

O Dove, tired Dove,
(Thus sang he in the night-time drear)
I know thy cypress leaf,
But though thou bringest grief,
I cry, “My love,”
I loudly cry, “My love,
For me, in darkness, do not fear
The night is departing, day is near.”

JOSEPH BENNETT.

THE latest eccentricity in musical inventions is a paper piano.

THE divorce between M. Nicolini and his wife has been pronounced.

WOMAN, said a cynical bachelor, is a good deal like an accordion. You can draw her out, but she makes music when you try to shut her up.

A VIENNESE musician has composed an opera on the subject of *As you Like it*, the first time that the idyllic play has received treatment in a complete opera form.

FOR some artists there are other things in the world than art itself. Alboni, for instance, always insisted on having her salary before singing a note, and would place it carefully in her corset. “I do not know how it is,” she would say, “but the words come out better when it is here.” Mangini always placed his money in his left stocking, and Badiali wore a belt in which he hid his store. At times he would amuse himself by weighing the gold in a pair of apothecary’s scales.

THE prospectus for the fifteenth season of the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society’s concerts is about to be issued. Ten performances will be given. M. Gounod’s *Mors et Vita* will be produced for the first time in London on November 4, and the work will be repeated on the afternoon of November 14th. The other compositions announced are Sir Arthur Sullivan’s *Martyr of Antioch*, Hiller’s *Song of Victory*, Berlioz’ *Faust*, Gounod’s *Redemption*, Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, and Handel’s *Messiah*, and *Judas Maccaebaeus*. The principal artists are Mesdames Albani, Valleria, de Marion, Winn, and Patey; Misses Anna Williams, Cramer, Hope Glenn, and Hilda Wilson; Messrs. Lloyd, Maas, Foote, Mills, Burgon, Pyatt, Foli, and Santley. The conductor will be Mr. Joseph Barnby.

EDOUARD REMENYI, the Hungarian violinist, is at present giving concerts in China.

HER Majesty honoured Madame Albani-Gye and Mr. Gye with a visit at Old Mar Lodge on Wednesday, the 23rd ultimo.

SIGNOR PIATTI, whose recovery is sure but slow, is not likely to appear at the Popular Concerts before Christmas. His substitute will, in all probability, be M. Franz Néruda.

MR. JULIAN ADAMS’ complimentary Concert at Eastbourne passed off with every success. The artists were Madame Patey, Mr. J. T. Carrodus and Mr. Bernhard Carrodus.

MUNKACSY, the great Hungarian painter, has nearly completed a picture entitled, “Mozart on his death-bed.” The dying composer is represented as listening to his *Requiem*.

MADAME GERSTER is organizing an opera company, with the aid of Mr. Abbey, which will include Madlle. Louise Lablache, Signor Campanini, and Madame Rivé-King.

ON Tuesday, the 6th inst., the diplomas, certificates, and awards to the successful students of Trinity College will be distributed, and an inaugural address delivered on “The place of Criticism in Musical Study,” by the Rev. H. G. Bonavia Hunt, Mus. Bac.

AMERICA is the first possessor of a brass band composed entirely of women. The uniform is of black velvet, tightly fitting and plainly made, with a golden epaulette on each shoulder, and hats bound round with gold cord. Spectacularly the effect is good; musically it is no better than that made by men.

We are sorry to gather from a neat little “Record,” published by the Cheltenham Musical Society, that the institution in question is not doing as well as it might. Only one Concert was possible last season because, though the members attended for practice in goodly numbers during the first half of the period, they fell away later. It appears, moreover, that out of 129 members, 25 have given notice to withdraw. In such a town as Cheltenham this ought not to be, and we sincerely trust that the amateurs who remain faithful to the Society will work with some enthusiasm during the approaching winter, to make up lost ground. The Musical Society has done a good work in the Gloucestershire town, and ought to be supported.

HERR RUBINSTEIN is evidently absorbed with all his heart and soul in the composition of his new opera *Moses*. He writes:—“*Moses* is the most ideal work that a composer can undertake; I have given all my power to it and shall not rest until it is finished. The performance of it will last four hours. The work is too theatrical for the concert-room and too much like an oratorio for the theatre; it is, in truth, the perfect type of the ‘sacred opera’ that I have dreamed of for years. What will come of it, I know not, and I do not think the work will be performed entire. It contains eight distinct parts; one or two may from time to time be given either in a concert or on the stage. I am half through the sketch of the work, which I hope to have finished by the end of September. For completing the score I require a whole summer, so that the work will not be ready before September, 1886.”

